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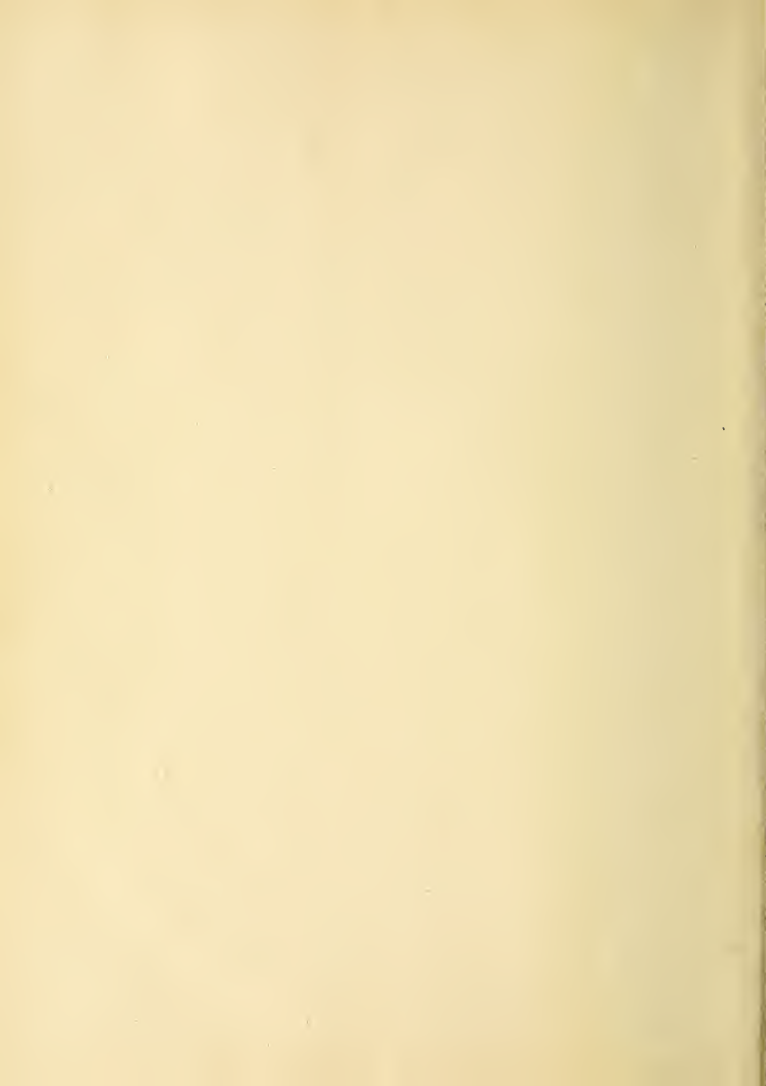
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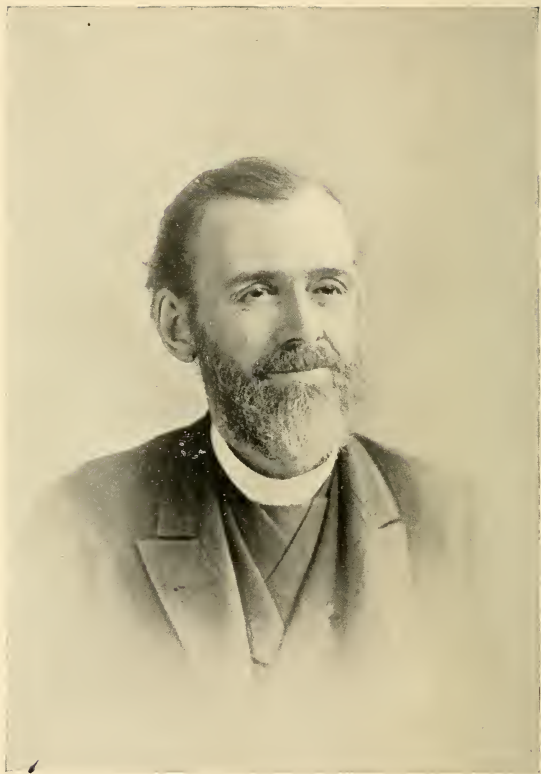
Spices from the Lord's Garden



Bible Readings

DELIVERED BY REV. E. I. D. PEPPER IN THE PHILADELPHIA FRIDAY MEETING. COLLECTED AND
ARRANGED BY EVANGELIST E. L. HYDE





REV. E. I. D. PEPPER.

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Agents Wanted.

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PREFACE.

THESE Bible Readings were almost extemporaneous, although some of the trains of thought were familiar to the speaker. They were not written and read, but spoken and reported. While the reports of extemporaneous addresses may not be as satisfactory in all respects as carefully-written discourses, yet they may convey to the reader more of the life and force of public speech. Brother Pepper could not sufficiently recollect what he had said to make any extensive correction, but has consented to the publication of these Bible Readings in this form.

E. L. HYDE.

“NEVER-THE-LESS.”

Feb. 22, 1894.

Text : Luke 18 : 8.

This word “nevertheless” is a remarkable word. It is three words in one. It comes in after a very difficult problem has been stated ; or after great difficulties have been encountered ; or after great deliverances have been wrought out ; while our adversaries are about us ; or after all our adversaries have been defeated. It emphatically declares : Nevertheless, the truth is not made any the less ; the truth has not been damaged ; the facts remain the same ; no matter what seems to contradict them. “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” I am sorry this grand word comes in here on the wrong and reproachful side for some of us. Read verses 2-5 : “Because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.” That is the saying of an “unjust judge,” one who “feared not God, neither regarded man ;” an unjust man acting as a judge, making a travesty of justice, and yet he would do this favor for this woman, lest she weary him. “And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though He bear long with them?” It is divinity

as over against humanity ; infinite justice as over against human injustice ; such injustice as neither feared God nor regarded man. It is God over against that unjust judge. If that man would avenge that poor widow, to get rid of her, how much more will God avenge us who are His own elect ? We get scared ! Our adversaries are after us ! We plead and importune with God ! He comes to our rescue again and again in our sorest extremity ! " Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth ? " When He comes to us, even after such marvelous deliverances, shall He find faith in us ?

Oh how hard it is to teach us this lesson ! that God has been a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God since the dawn of creation, and that He has often answered the prayers of others and our own. We are not the judges of God's providences ; or of what things are to be done under certain circumstances. These things that we know not now, will unfold with the ages. The time will come when, standing in the white light of heaven, we will find this question answered : " Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? " Our hearts too often get cast down ; we are oppressed, persecuted and troubled ; " all these things are against us ; " then we resolve ourselves into that old interrogation point, " Why ? " " Why must this happen ? I never

loved God as I do now ; I never was so conscious that I am living to God's glory as I am now ; yet with all that why has God permitted this ? When I was a sinner things seemed to go better than they do now ; when I was a smoky, joky member of the church, things seemed to go better ; but as soon as I gave myself to God fully, how the difficulties gathered about me ! " How often sad and plaintive letters like this come to our office : " I am the only one who is standing for holiness in our church ; I can only look up to God and trust God, but why ? " Ah, over all this, through all this, the Judge of all the earth is doing right ! The hour is coming in your history when the whole thing that you understand not now, and groan under now, will be explained under the light of the Great White Throne, and an abundant entrance will be administered to you into the kingdom of heaven. .

Ought we not to be ashamed of ourselves that this lesson of faith has to be taught us again and again ? Do we not remember when we were poor sinners ; when as the old preachers used to say, " we were hair-hung and breeze-shaken over the pit of hell ? " How we cried ! How our food was tasteless and our nights were restless ! But just when we were in despair, then the Lord forgave, then the burden rolled off, and then all our mourning was turned into rejoicing.

Then in all the after years the Lord has guided our way and provided for our needs. Oh, if we would only stop looking at our troubles to look at our mercies ! What prayers have been answered ! What precious seasons we have seen ! What blessings we have felt ! How our hearts have been lifted up and lit up, and the darkness has gone ! It would be a good thing to keep a ledger,—to take an inventory of prayers that have been answered. We ought to make a note of answered prayers. If we just keep some little account with God, and measure all the lovingkindnesses and tender mercies that have come to us in answer to prayer, we could then measure Christ's reproachful question : "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth ?" Shall he find faith in us ?

Do you remember, too, after you said that you "did not believe there was sin in believers," and that you "could not understand the repentance of believers," how the Holy Ghost uncapped your soul, and you went down into your motives, and found vanity, worldliness, ill-humors and all that dreadful brood of inward vipers ? Do you remember when the cleansing blood came, and the fire of the Holy Ghost burned out your sin and uncleanness, and made you "whiter than snow ?"

Do you remember, too, all the prayers that have since been answered, all your importunate

prayers ; yea, even your ejaculatory prayers ?

What ails you ? A man does not go into a dark room and take a broom and sweep the darkness out. He opens the door and lets the light in, and—the darkness is gone ! Lord, take us back ! Wipe out that “ nevertheless ” against us. I could get a lot of trouble up in five minutes if I wanted to, but I do not propose to ! I propose to believe right through. I propose to keep on saying, “ Glory, anyhow ! ” Get your faith in good exercise right there. Keep saying, “ Lord, I do not know or understand anything about it—glory anyhow ! ” Are we believers ; believers in fact ?

REAL CHRISTLIKENESS.

March 1, 1894.

Text: Luke 20; 1-8.

We are to be Christ-like, but let us not be mistaken as to what Christ-likeness is. Let us not get an exquisite and namby-pamby sort of an idea of Christ-likeness. We must remember that the Apostle John was called the loving and beloved disciple, yet he was the plainest spoken man among them all. I once heard Rev. Andrew Longacre preach a sermon on "saintliness." It depicted an earnest, practical, true, honorable, honest, faithful, diligent and entirely consecrated life, within and without. It was, indeed, a charming picture; but its great charm was in its every-day practicability.

I wish we could please everybody; I wish I might tell you that you could; but if we think we can, we are sure to find soon that we have been mistaken. A man who is converted thinks that all he has to do is to tell how happy he is, and that then everybody will hug him up and become converted too; but he soon finds his mistake. The same with a person who has been entirely sanctified. He resolves to show forth perfect love by his unexceptionable life; he makes up his mind to be careful, to be

heavenly-minded, to be gentle-spirited, to be very prudent. He says to himself and to others: "I will try to demonstrate this thing in every proper way, and so win others into the experience;" but he forgets how long it was that the light failed to get into his mind and conscience and heart; he forgets how long others patiently bore with him; how long some of the sweetest saints of God labored and talked with him; how this went on for days and months and years, and that his spirit was getting worse all the time.

The people mentioned in our text did not all of them accept Christ; some did; some of the church members did; but the narrative tells us that some of the heads of the Church "came upon him." Could any one preach the gospel of Christ better than Christ himself? Did not Christ speak as never man spake? And yet the gospel of Christ, preached with the spirit of Christ and with marvelous love, what effect did it have? The heads of ecclesiastical departments "came upon Him."

I do not know how we will be treated by all people, or by all the ministry, or even by all the heads of the Church. Those who came upon Christ knew more about "authority" than about "baptisms from heaven." If a minister is in for show and popularity and position, and is concerned more about "authority" than about baptisms from heaven, we may

not find a cordial reception from him for a Christ-like spirit or for Christ-like words ; for Christ-likeness is the very opposite to all that.

We must get away beyond the desire to be tickled with greetings in the market-place (popularity) ; to walk in long robes (show) ; to occupy the chief seats in the synagogues and in the chief rooms (ambition). We have sometimes to get away from the question of "Who gave thee this authority?" We have to get out where we can hear the voice of the Spirit of God. There are people who will not believe it ; but there is an experience in which praise or blame are rated according to their just merit, and when a Christ-like man finds his praise beyond what he ought to have, his sanctified soul rejects it. That is a state of independence. We need not go out of the Church to find it or away from the priests. Christ did not go out of the Church ; Christ recognized the priesthood, degenerate as it was then ; Christ ordered those who wanted to be cleansed to go and shew themselves to the priests ; nevertheless He went right straight on, preferring "baptisms from heaven" to technical questions of authority.

Is there not something pathetic, sublimely pathetic in that verse 13?—"I will send my beloved Son : it may be they will reverence Him when they see Him." Oh, to look in those divine eyes, to look upon that divine person,

to see Christ Himself, to hear the words that fell from the lips of Him that "spake as never man spake!" Could anybody help but reverence Him? Yet what was the result? "This is the heir; let us kill Him. Then the inheritance will be ours." They withstood Him because they feared His influence on their authority. He perceived their craftiness. They could not take hold of His words before the people, and they marvelled at his answers, and held their peace. They could not tempt Him by the flattery that He accepted no man's person, but taught the way of God truly.

Let us get where, when there is a question between authority and "baptisms from heaven," we will be on the side of "baptisms from heaven" every time. These positions on earth are unreliable, they are of the earth earthy, and, like the earth, they pass away. We are rushing through time to the end of the world, when all these things shall be burned up. Then what will remain will be eternal. What we are building inside will outlast what we are building on the outside. "The earth shall pass away." Then many things that seem now so important to men will be seen to be nothing at all, and worse than nothing, and vanity. Then will come the dawn of eternity and the vision of God. Then what will remain forever will be permanence of character—of Christ-like character. Then will be heard those solemn

and final words, "He that is unjust let him be unjust still, and he that is holy let him be holy still."

Lord make me true! deliver me from mere show! deliver me from ambition and craving for popularity! deliver me from being tickled away from the truth! Oh, I get sick of this over-weening "authority" fever! "By what authority?" Even the disciples got it. Once they said, "He followeth not us,—stop Him!" Authority is right, but not when used against real "baptisms from heaven."

All I want is just to put Jesus before you. I want you to get the right idea of Him just as He was, faithful, fearless, outspoken, firm for the truth. Now let us be "in Christ's stead." Let us be Christ-like. Oh, to be where we are not afraid to be true, no matter what comes; to get where, after receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as well as the baptism of John, when the question comes, "By what authority doest thou these things?" we can say, "I do it by the authority of my baptism from heaven." When we get there we will be like Christ was. In these days we need these refreshings from the presence of the Lord; these unctuous times, when our hearts are melted down and our minds are clarified with light, and we see things as God sees them; when ourselves and our personal advantages and our desire for show and popularity go out, and there comes

in that spirit that can weigh all those things in the balance of eternity.

I wake up at midnight, and these things come into my mind. I will soon be gone. I do not know how soon. I sometimes think of things I did in my boyhood and in youth and in manhood, and even since I have been in the ministry, with humiliation ; but I would like before I go into the presence of that Omniscient eye to be thoroughly true. I want to see myself as God sees me, and as the universe shall see me. I want the past to go under the blood and into oblivion. I love to go deep through my own soul. I never stop telling a truth because it goes through me.

THE LIFE IS THE LIGHT.

March 29, 1894.

Text: John 1 : 4.

Christ is the source of all life. He is the source of all natural life. Listen to these strange words, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him ; and without Him was not anything made that was made." The Word was in the beginning. The Word was the Creator of all things. Jesus Christ is the Word. He was in the beginning. He is the source of all natural life.

But then He is just as much, being God, the source of spiritual life, of all spiritual life, and the source of all eternal life. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

The point I want to make is this : Jesus Christ, in Himself, is the source of all spiritual life ; that Christ dwells in us ; that He is the source of our spiritual life. Our religious experience from beginning to end, from the time we were born again throughout all eternity, is from Christ, in Christ and by Christ. That life is our "light." Do you know that we get more true light, more white light, more reliable light, the only truly valuable light we get on

religious experience, from an inward religious experience that comes from Christ? When souls are first converted we are often afraid of them, afraid they will come to harm, afraid to let them go out into the world ; we fairly push books into their hands, and bid them, "Read this, or this!" for fear they will go astray. That is all right ; but do you know, when I was converted to God when a boy, I had a light that was as clear, I do not know but that it was brighter, than when I left the child-experience behind? I declare there is something wonderful in this Christ-like light. The light that comes from the new experience in the things of God, how wonderful it is ! How tender it is ! How conscientious it is ! How it shrinks back from sin ! Some who were converted at the beginning, but who somehow have lost it out of their souls, will allow themselves to do or think or feel or say things that they would not have done when they were first converted. Oh, for the tenderness of conscience of a new convert !

So it is when persons are entirely sanctified. We are almost afraid to let them go out of the Church where they have just come into the experience. Ah, there is a life in them that accords with that Bible, and that life is their light. Just let a man become clear on entire sanctification, and how his brain clears up ! Everything seems to be right. The incoming

of that life, that experience of perfect love, solved his problems, enlightened his perplexities, took his doubts out of his mind and the hesitation out of his soul, and he could tell you more of sanctification in that moment than he could from all the theological books that he had ever read. But let him let slip a little, what is the result? What is the matter with his brain? The life is gone out; the deep, Christ-like, spiritual life, which was his light, has grown dim.

Christ is the Light of the world. He shines on every soul. Some know Him not. Some reject Him, and, in rejecting Him, light goes out of their minds, and doubt comes into their souls at once. But to them that receive Him, to them He gives the power, the right, the privilege to become the sons of God.

Read that 47th verse, "No guile." What a beautiful word! "Guileless." Guileless is a great, good thing! but oh, what is "guileless?" Only the difference of a letter. The very word "guileless" has a sort of bell-like music in it. This Nathaniel experience is exactly what I am talking about,— "no guile." That guileless spirit comes from Christ. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

I declare, if I were asked which to do for a person who desired to be entirely sanctified, if there were a pile of books on the subject on the one side, and on the other a deep interior life

that comes from Christ, I would rather turn him loose without a book (except the Bible); for His life is our light. Not simply Christ's example is our light, though that is true, of course; but I am speaking of Christ as the source of spiritual "life," and the "light" that comes therefrom. Do you see it? Oh, to have the Divine Godhead, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in our hearts to enlighten our minds, to guide our footsteps, to keep us from error!

You go to a new convert and tell him, "You can do so and so,—it is no harm,—preachers do it." He will say, "It somehow does not chime right with the Word." That Word is "hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes." "Something inside," says he, "tells me not to think or feel or say or do that thing. I am not much at argument; but I do understand my own soul."

How this simplifies everything! A man cannot carry his library around on his back; but he can carry God in his heart. He has the whole Divine library in his heart and brain wherever he goes. I do not wonder that the Quakers talk about the "Inward Monitor."

Is it not a blessed thing that, while Christ says his converts are "lambs among wolves," and while we do not want to turn them out there among the wolves, yet somehow they are not torn to pieces? Can you imagine me, with

my little one looking up into my eye with trustful happiness, can you imagine me leading her where she would get hurt? Do you believe that? No, you do not!

Let us trust ourselves to God! Let us get right in our hearts! Let us move in the light of that deeply interior experience!

I do not know much outside of that. I have unlearned many things. How the thing is all simplified down! I gave nearly all my library away long ago to poor young preachers; but I have God in my soul; I have Christ in my soul; I have the Holy Ghost in my soul. I have an inner life. I have an inner light. That light comes from the Life. I am glad that the way to heaven is not through a theological seminary. It is through God and Christ and the Holy Ghost. I am so glad it is so simple. Glory be to God! Is there anybody here who has just entered the new experience of conversion? Do not get scared if you have Christ in your soul. Is there any one just trembling in the new experience of entire sanctification? Do not get scared because you do not know much or have not read much. He is teaching you. Stick to him!

CHRIST-LIKE CONVERSATION.

April 5, 1894.

Text: John 4: 27: "Why talkest thou with her?"

What a grand thing it would be if every conversation had as good an answer to the "why?" as that one with this woman had. Oh, how much talk there is that is only about folly! And how much talk about nothing at all, and about something worse even than that,—Lord, help us! How these tongues of ours go! That was a conversation which Christ had with this woman.

It occurred to me to look for the answer to the "why?" and see what the conversation was about. There are three points in this conversation of Christ that are very striking and beautiful, and which bring out the "why" and the "end" and the "object" of a Christ-like conversation.

The first thing He talked about was His own inexhaustible sufficiency. "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever (mark that 'whosoever') drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him (in

him—mark that !) a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” In those eastern countries those old-time wells were inexpressibly valuable. They fought for them. A great rock-well is valuable in any place. Some fight for them now. But here is a man that carries the well of water around with Him. Nobody to interfere with Him. A well of living water “springing up into everlasting life.” Oh, the inexhaustible sufficiency of Christ ! Not stagnant, but living water. Flowing on forever.

Another thing He talked about was the Divine spirituality, and the spirituality and truthfulness of our worship. Spirituality and reality. “God is a Spirit ; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” We must be honest to worship God ; we must be truthful to worship God ; we must have deep, intense, real spirituality to worship God. How far removed is this from what passes for worship in these days ? Family worship, social worship, public worship, must have some form ; but oh, how far—as “far as the east is from the west”—is our formality from this spirituality and our falsity from this truthfulness ; this coming into the reality of God ; this sinking into the spirituality of God ; this worshipping God in His own nature ! Electricity strikes. Spirituality is not a tedious thing. We do not have to go over many words. It strikes right to the heart. It strikes from the Divine heart,

and goes right to our hearts. O deep, true spiritual worship! where every time is holy time, every place is holy ground, and every avocation is a holy vocation. Everywhere we are, there is in us this deep spirituality, and this transparent honesty that can bear to come into the divine Presence and say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts." That is a wonderful prayer. Do you think you could say to-day, "Search me, O God?" Could you talk that way to God? Then you are coming into downright honesty with your own conscience, with everybody, and better than all else, with God.

Christ talked also about moral and religious living. He told this woman all that ever she did. Somebody says that "some people are religious, but not always very moral." There is no possibility of severing religion from morality. There is a deception somewhere. This woman had not been good, and there is a searchingness in the conversation between the two that is Christ-like. There is something in it that goes through and through the conscience, and through and through the most hidden avenues of the human soul. A man may not be conscious that he is ploughing up another man's soul. That is the reason many go away from hearing a sermon and say, "Somebody has been telling that preacher all about me."

But there is a higher life than merely not doing wrong, Jesus said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." He had had His meal. That is a little different from people on a camp-meeting ground, running when they hear the dinner-bell. It is a rising into the Christ-like spirit, whose "meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." It is self-forgetfulness. I said He had had His meal; but nobody had given him anything. He had only had the spiritual sustenance from heaven. There is a sublimity, a Christ-like sublimity, in that making the doing of our Father's will our very meat, what we live on.

But there is something beyond that. It is fruit. Christ also spoke of the near harvest and of the need of laborers. The salvation of others was also his theme. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. That is all He did come for. He had no other inducement. That is what we ought to be doing. That is the make-up of a Christ-like conversation. Oh, if we would only turn over our conversations from the negative to the positive, from the inferior to the superior, from the damaging to the saving.

If only our souls could rise into a higher atmosphere. "Out of the abundance of a good heart the mouth speaketh." The heart spontaneously talks about what fills it. It is not by constraint. No, it is to get the brain

right ; it is to get the heart right ; then, without constraint, just out of the abundance of a good heart, to pour it out. When a man binds himself up to act a certain way, and to talk a certain way, he is likely to talk that way at one time, and another way at another time ; but when he has "in him" this Christ-like spirit, this well of water, he will just pour it out. I want Christ in me, so that somehow He will talk Himself and live Himself. I believe He is in me, and talks and lives through me.

HOLY GHOST GUIDANCE.

May 24, 1894.

Text: Acts 16: 6-10.

The Spirit is not directing us to go everywhere that we may at first think He is. In my text the Spirit forbids them to go to one place; "suffered them not" to go to another place, but some way induced them to go to a third place.

The Holy Spirit is Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent. He is the executive of the Godhead. We are under His more immediate dispensation, and we must not distrust and dishonor Him. We must not discount His functions and His work. Now, I sometimes think, we are a little afraid along this line. Persons say, "The Lord said thus and so to me; He told me to go here or there," and instantly we are afraid of fanaticism. But the divine personal Holy Ghost, if He please, can say some things to us. The divine personal Holy Ghost, if we will let Him, can restrain us from going where we ought not, and the divine personal Holy Ghost can get us where He wants us if we only let Him. Now do not flinch!

How is that done? I do not know, but that does not argue against the fact. How does a

child grow? We cannot tell, but,—the child grows! John Wesley says, in regard to the Trinity, all our troubles are in reference to the “how?” and not the “what.” Our business is with the revealed fact. Herein is a marvelous thing: This singular thing we call the human voice; we cannot see it, but we hear it. I stand in this pulpit and my voice goes out through my lips, and gets into your ears, and in some singular way produces impressions on your brain, on your heart and conscience, and on your whole life. It is a creature talking to his fellow creature. I cannot tell what the human voice is or how it gets into your ears and impresses your brain. I may be producing impressions now that will be as eternal as God Himself. Herein is a marvelous thing if a creature can influence the creature, and yet the Creator cannot influence the creature! You see the absurdity of that.

The Spirit can do this indirectly through persons and through the Word. I know that He never influences us to do anything contrary to that Word; but, at the same time, the divine personal Holy Ghost can talk to me in the darkness of the midnight hour; He can fill my mind with the most delightful, profitable, deeply spiritual, heavenly things. I can be just as distinctly conscious that I am communing with the Holy Ghost and He with me as I

can be now conscious that I am communicating with you.

But you ask, "What about impulses and impressions? So many difficulties come from following these!" I know it. I am walking a hair line just here. I know that dreadful things result along the line of flying off at a tangent. I know the dreadful things resulting from mistaking our own impulses for the Divine impulses; but to be intensely spiritual is to be exactly Scriptural, and to be exactly Scriptural is to be intensely spiritual. I will hazard this statement: If we could go down through all the mysteries and vagaries of impulses, we would find that those who were merely following their own impulses had, in some way, departed from the clear teaching of that Word. They make the Holy Ghost responsible for nonsense.

But, on the other hand, what is the witness of the Holy Spirit to my spirit that I am a child of God? Do I read the Bible and infer from that I am a child of God? We do not teach that. We do not tell a man to read a lot of books, or to put himself to the proof, or to go into a lot of arguments with himself to prove that he is a child of God. Our religion is not a religion of speculation; it is a religion of consciousness, of knowledge. It is the Holy Ghost saying to this man, "The sins of thy life time are forgiven; they are behind My

back!" and the man knows it. How does he know it? I do not know.

As it is in regard to the witness of the Spirit to salvation, so is it in the matter of divine guidance. Jesus Christ says, "My sheep know my voice." I must however insist upon it that, if we are under the influence of the divine personal Holy Ghost, He keeps us always along Scriptural lines. Just as quickly as a man departs from the Word of God he may talk about spirituality; but what does he know of spirituality except from the Bible? There are three prominent facts in this lesson: They "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia;" "the Spirit suffered them not" to go into Bithynia; and when the call came from Macedonia away they went.

I want to call your attention to how this led on,—not to what you might call great congregations and brilliant work,—but it led on to the meeting with the woman "whose heart the Lord opened." When they got through with that woman, they were led on to quite a different ministry. They were led to the woman possessed of the spirit of divination. Then they were led on to the prison, the cruel prison, and the stocks, and the lash, and the midnight praises.

Oh, when we get under the influence of the Holy Ghost, when we get pliable, not fanatical, He can tell us things He cannot tell to every

one, and He can trust us as He could not trust everybody. When He gets us into communion and fellowship with Himself, the mind and heart get into an impressible condition, a manageable condition. Have you known occasions when the Holy Ghost restrained you? (Brother Thompson: I have, consciously.) Have you had the experience where you have known exactly where you ought to go? (Bro. Thompson: I surely have had such experiences.) In these days of fanaticism and ritualism, in these days of materialism and externalism, we want something deeply interior, intensely spiritual. We want something that can make the best use of forms without being crippled by forms. We want the divine personal Holy Ghost to do just what the Bible says He will do, come into us and dwell in us, so that these bodies will be moving sanctuaries, moving churches, so that every place becomes holy ground. Oh, glory be to God!

Where do you find the most heterodoxy? In a spiritual Church? In a singing, shouting, fiery, devoted, devotional Church? You will find it more among "brain-y" than among "heart-y" people. I take history and the Bible for that. What has upheld the Methodist Church to this hour is her firm adherence to the Word of God and the "Witness of the Spirit." If Methodism ever swings clear of this,—which may God forbid!—you will find

where the heterodoxy is. A man who is filled with the Holy Ghost has not time for heterodoxy. There is a light within him that tells him the difference between the husks and the corn, the shell and the kernel, the body and the life. When a man gets there he never forgets that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and he goes about doing the same work, saving sinners.

Our business is to be filled with the Spirit. Do not be afraid! I would not let my little child go wrong, much less put her wrong. The Holy Spirit knows better than I. I am not going to trouble my childlike soul when I come to the dark, rough places, lest my Father should lose His nature and the Son His interest, and lest the Holy Spirit should let me go wrong or put me wrong. I will stick to the Bible and to the Holy Ghost.

ASSURANCE IN EMERGENCIES.

June 7, 1894.

Text, Acts 27: 22-25.

We are as the "apple of His eye." How quickly the lashes close to protect, and how quickly the hand is raised when a foreign particle is about to invade this tender member! So, as "the apple of His eye," God raises His hand between us and anything that could injure us. There are crises in every man's life when God "stands by" him. There are climaxes in every woman's life when God "stands by" her. What does it matter whether God "stands by" directly or indirectly? Sometimes the manifestation is rather that of the Father's presence; sometimes it seems that we are more distinctly conscious of the presence of the Son; then, at other times, it is the presence of the Holy Ghost. But, whichever of the Persons in the Divine Trinity is most consciously manifested, it is the Father, Son and Holy Ghost that "stand by" a man or woman in their emergency. What difference whether He "stands by" a man directly or indirectly? What difference whether directly or through a book or a human instrument? It is not a matter of great difference to God,

whether the instrument He uses is great or small. In this verse (23d) it says that "there stood by me this night the angel of God,"—but God was back of the angel! Not far back, either, not far back.

The first thought I want you to notice is this; There are great emergencies in every good man's life when he gets assurances from God, and these assurances are not simply in regard to himself, but regarding other people, too. (Verse 24), "Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." "Thou must be brought before Cæsar,"—that was in regard to himself. "God hath given thee all them that sail with thee,"—that was for the others. "The old ship will soon go to pieces; every board will go from beneath you, but no man shall lose his life!" How angels could communicate that; how do I know? How angels can talk to men; how do I know? But I know this, I know that God has "stood by" me more than once, at the midnight hour and in times of distress, when there seemed no possible outlet; but God was there all the same.

Take the instance when those women went to the sepulchre, and were talking and debating all the way as to how the stone should be rolled away. All their time spent in debating was lost, for when they got there the stone was

gone. "Fear not!" You do not see the way out, but God does. You cannot see the angel of the Lord, but he is standing by you. I think he stood by me last night.

On what condition does God stand by holy men and women in emergencies, crises, climaxes in life?

The first condition is entire consecration, entire sanctification. "Whose I am." "There stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am,"—he had gone over, body, mind and soul; Pharisaism, official position, prospects, everything! He had not been afraid to give himself up to God, afraid he would lose position or popularity. Thank God, I do not belong to anybody else! I am no man's man; I am God's man. If a man can get himself out of his own clutches and the clutches of other people, and can reach a state of holy independence of everybody but God, it seems to me that the man ought to go wild with delight. Instead of holding on to this one and that one, he ought to feel, "God stands by me; I belong to Him!" Let us get ourselves into the hands of God. Let us feel that all we have and are belongs to God, and what belongs to Him He will look out for, what does not belong to Him it does not matter about. If you want it to be safe and sure, get it over into God's hands.

Another qualification for having God "stand by" us, is "Whom I serve." But that follows:

That is an effect, that follows the cause, "whose I am." No man can "serve" God until he "belongs" to God,—“Whose I am.”

What was the next condition? Sometimes God saves a man or a woman singly; sometimes their safety is in hanging together. There is a great deal in the fellowship of the saints! "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." If any man jumps overboard; if any man gets out of this boat, he is gone. "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." God sent the angel to give Paul assurance that not only should his life be spared, but every one in the ship besides. Stay on board! There is safety in Christian fellowship,—stay on board the ship of Zion, and let the winds blow and the storms rage, and the waves roar,—stay on board! "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." It is a grand thing when a man feels, not only for himself but for his family, or for some Church, or for some body of Christian people, that somehow God puts in him an assurance of safety. "Stick to Me, I will stick to you. I will take care of you, and I will give you your sons and daughters to be with you in the ark of safety. I will grant that your fatherly prayers and motherly intercessions shall not be lost. I will give you all the rest."

The last condition is, Prayerful and praiseful waiting on God. Look at this picture: Here

were these fellows scrambling over the ship,—some of them did not know what to do, running to and fro in dismay and terror. What did Paul do ! Why, “the angel of the Lord stood by him the night before,” and he stood on that ship with the dignity of holy assurance, and (verse 33) “while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat.” Brethren, this is a wonderful sight ! I have been at sea in a storm. I know what it is. Those poor fellows all so scared, and that man of God who, the night before, had been honored with the angel of the Lord standing by him to comfort him, there he stood, breaking bread. “I have got the assurance, None of you shall be lost.” That is the power of a calm, quiet, holy dignity and assurance in God. That is the power of a man who, when everybody else is rushing about on the deck, can stand in praiseful worship.

God knows everything. God knows everybody. He knows where you are, and what ails you, and what troubles you ; and if you stand by Him, He stands by you ; if he does not, He is false, and when God goes, all is gone. Oh, loose your hold upon everything earthly and human, but never loose your grasp of God ! If you loose this, what can you cling to ? Talk about a drowning man grasping at a straw ! What are you doing who grasp at anything but God ? God lived before anything else,—He is living yet. “The same yesterday, to-day, and forever.” Hallelujah !

AT HOME IN THE HEAVENLIES.

June 14, 1894.

Ephesians 1 : 17-23.

Some people think that the "high places" and the "holy places" and the "heavenly places" are the dangerous places. They are afraid they will get dizzy up there ; afraid they will tumble. I was preacher in a church once, and one of the members, a very carefully spoken man, came to me and said, "Pastor, can you not tell us how to be saved without being saved so 'high up'?" I told him that "if we were not saved 'high up,' and were not kept saved 'high up,' we would not be saved at all." Some people think that if they have so much trouble in keeping a little religion, they must, of course, have greater trouble if they have more. That is some people's idea of religion. But, the fact is, the "high places" are the "holy places," and the "holy places" are the "heavenly places," and the "heavenly places" are the safe places. The "heavenly places," *i. e.*, the heaven-like places ; places like heaven. There are such places. The apostle here is talking about heaven on earth,—about the "heavenly places," the places that are like heaven. Glory !

A man wrote to the paper once, saying that the best place in all the world for him was a holiness meeting. I wrote an editorial on that, the substance of which was this, that "the best place in all the world for me was just where God wanted me to be." The best place in all the world is the will of God. In the will of God is a heaven-like place, and outside of the will of God it is not like heaven, not like holy places, not like "high places." Do you suppose that an angel picks out whether he will stay in heaven or come down to this sin-cursed earth when he learns the will of God? Do you suppose that he picks out whether he will go to a palace or to a poor garret? No angel would say that because the will of God had sent him to some hovel he had been dishonored. No angel would think that, because he had been sent to some church with a message to the saints, he had been specially honored. Their heaven is where God wants them to go.

Places like heaven,—what music there is in that sentence!

We sit (mark that!), we "sit" in these heaven-like places. That sounds like staying, you see!

We "sit together" in these places that are like heaven. Did you ever see people in a car? They get in together, and though there are vacant seats elsewhere, they somehow wait for the person beside whom their companion has

taken his seat to move up,—they have been “together ;” they came in “together ;” they belong “together.” The saints of the Lord are much the same. “Sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (chap. 2 : 6). Kindred spirits draw together, and somehow or other we get things fixed and sit down together, then we are all right.

Then we sit there, in the “heavenly places,” “before Him.” See how it all comes together ? We sit together in places like heaven “before God.” I wish you to take that in.

Then He “blesses us with all spiritual blessings.” He lets us get “together,” then he puts on us “all spiritual blessings.”

These “heavenly places” are the “holy places,”—“that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.” Nobody can get into a heaven-like place without being holy. These heavenly places are the holy places.

Then they are the safe places. Turn to the latter part of this chapter : “The riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints . . . the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe.” His power is not in the abstract ; the apostle is not just talking on this attribute of God as abstract. We sometimes look at the attributes of God as a man would at a far-distant cold peak, but the apostle is not speaking in that way. “To usward who believe,”—to believing people. “The exceeding greatness

of his power,"—not abstractly considered, but "to usward who believe,"—it is all directed to us. Like a great search-light, it goes all around and falls on us. The divine Almightyness is all gathered up and focalized and turned down on one or more poor souls. "To usward,"—I do not care how things seem, God is on the side of His people. The "exceeding greatness" of Divine power is toward believers.

What is the nature of this power? . . . "According to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead." This "exceeding great" divine power, "to usward who believe," is "according to the working of His power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead." Marvelous! But it is not my talk. There are just three things in this power which He wrought in Christ: He "raised Him from the dead,"—that is the power that wrought in Christ; so, the "exceeding greatness of that power that" raised Him from the dead is "to usward who believe." It is the same power that raised Christ from the dead that raises our souls from the death of sin into the newness of spiritual and resurrection life. Not a particle of difference. Then this power not only raised Christ from the dead, but it "set Him at God's right hand," in those "heavenly places," those that these are like, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every

name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come," and that same power that put Him there raises us from the death of sin, and puts us in those heaven-like places here. Exactly the same power. The idea is of security, of safety. The idea is that of taking Christ out of the grave, and lifting Him "above all principality and power," etc. That same power that did that is "to usward that believe." It makes us to sit down in these places that are like heaven, in perfect safety. "And hath put all things under His feet,"—the devil downed! The accuser of the brethren downed!

O, I get sick of hearing so much of "the great opposition we encountered." Opposition! What is opposition to God? What is the good of talking about it? Get further on! Keep prayed up! The idea of taking these oppositions of man into account when God takes the very same power that put all things under Christ's feet to put all things under our feet! We had better take the Bible in, with its full scope, with its staggering assurances, and let us, like Abraham, "not stagger at the promise through unbelief;" but, like him, let us claim them, and take it all for granted. The heavenly places are the holy places, and the holy places are the safe places. All that we have to do is to put ourselves in the divine hands, and He makes us holy, and brings us over and sets us down in these heaven-like places, and then He

gives us things like heaven. This is not forcing Scripture. I have been there. I have "sat down together before God," with some people in places like heaven, and I have had foretastes of heaven, things like heaven. I do not know it because it is in the Bible, but because it is in my heart. What a grand thing to get into the hollow of the divine hand, and be made holy, and then to be set down in those places ! It is like, as Brother Inskip said, getting in an elevator. If we will just believe that the same power is in that elevator that took up hundreds of people, it will take us up,—we will get there without effort. Let us get in ! There is no other way so easy, for "there is no other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. Glory !

OUR MARVELOUS SALVATION.

June 28, 1894.

Text, Romans 10 : 12.

“In honor preferring one another.”

Is there any other philosophy, is there any other religion, is there any other Bible that contains anything like that sentiment? I do not think you can find that anywhere else, either in word or in deed. Who can reach that but unselfish souls? Who can reach that but entirely sanctified souls? Who can reach that but those that love the Lord their God with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind, with all their strength?

We talk about pure disinterestedness. Many believe its realization to be impossible in this world. St. Paul alluded to this almost universal self-interest in Phil. 2 : 20 : “For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.”

But he had one man, for he was speaking about this man in this chapter; a man that cared not altogether or principally for his own things, but more for those of other people.

He also gives us Christ’s example: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,” etc. (Phil. 2 : 3-11).

That is not human nature. That is supernaturalness. That is gracious naturalness. That is divine naturalness, that ceases to think of itself, and thinks for others, and spends for others, and gives precedence to others. Do you know an illustration of that? John the Baptist was one when he said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." You say, "Yes, but that was said by a human being concerning himself and the God-man." Yet that same spirit can dwell in human hearts and think of everything and everybody before itself. Oh, blessed state! Glorious state!

How is this done? The grace of God comes into a human soul, and takes out all that love for the honor that comes from man, and by "the expulsive power of a new affection," puts in the love of the honor that comes from God only. The grace of God makes earth so small, and God and heaven and holiness and the honor that comes from God so large, that practically it becomes to it all in all. The only honor it wants, or will accept, is the honor that does not come from the north or the south, or the east or the west, but from Him alone that setteth up one and putteth down another. The grace of God gets into a man's soul, and causes him to want nothing else but the will of God.

I dreamed last night that I was preaching to a large crowd, and I raised my voice and said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by

every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God!" And then, as it came with fresher meaning and wider scope, I raised my voice louder, and cried, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God!" And then, as it came with still greater force, I cried the third time with all my power of voice: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God!" We hang on the Divine Word,—on the Divine will. We are nothing and nobody. We are less than nothing and vanity. God becomes to us all-in-all.

A man once said to me,—he was speaking of faith: "We talk about faith. Suppose I held in my hand that Book containing the 'promises to pay' of the Divine administration, and in my other hand I held a lot of greenbacks,—the 'promises to pay' of the United States Government, which would I part with?" I tell you, when our pockets are full of greenbacks a sort of comfortable feeling comes in. But oh, this willingness to loose our hands upon every dollar, and upon everything earthly and human, and to "live not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." When a man gets there,—what is this world to him? Oh, it makes me weary and sick to see this scramble after position and power and preference! Oh, the lowly

soul, that can go back on itself and find God there! The lowly soul, that finds that the kingdom of God comes not with observation, not with outside pomp and show, but that finds that all it needs is not outside, but inside! Get there, and you want nothing of earth but what God wants you to have. Our safety, our protection, our all is simply in what God wants for us. The Psalmist speaks of the "perfect will of God concerning us." I add to that, and say, "The present and perfect will of God concerning us." That sentence conveys to me not only the "perfect will of God" concerning me, but the present "perfect will of God" concerning me moment by moment. As I stand here to-day I am,—I believe I am,—in the present perfect will of God concerning me. I do not have to budge, backward or forward. I stand here now in the present and perfect will of God concerning me. Oh, get there, and you will live in the light of the glory of God. You have that belief in the Holy Ghost that delights you to sink out of sight. Oh, what a marvelous gospel this is of ours! How it lifts us above everything else! Oh, that God would bring us in full view of Jesus Christ, who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation," etc.

This has been a marvelous day to me. It has been a day of quietness that could be heard,—is that a proper expression? We speak of a

“darkness that can be felt.” It has been a “quiet hallelujah” day to me. It seems to me as though I have been hardly touching this globe. It seems to me as though I am moving on in the “everlasting arms.” Did you ever see a mother pick up her little babe? She stoops down and gets it into her arms, and lifts it to her embrace. That is just the way I have felt the fingers of God getting around me, and lifting me into His “everlasting arms,” and then upon the Divine bosom; and then “between His shoulders;” as though God has stooped down and lifted us in His “everlasting arms,” and then rose with us. It seems as though my soul is resting down on the solid foundation. When the props are knocked away and we get down on God, we rest.

THE TRUE RELATIVES OF JESUS.

Nov. 8, 1894.

Texts, Matthew 12, commencing at verse 46, and Acts 21: 4, 10-14.

There are two charming scenes pictured here.

Here is the first with Christ sitting in the midst. Around him is an outside circle. Here are his natural relations, trying to get through to him. In an inner circle are his disciples. When they told him that his mother and his brethren desired to speak with him, he asked, "Who is my mother, and my sisters, and my brethren?" etc. Now, it was very delightful for those disciples in that inner circle to hear the Lord Christ preferring them to his own natural relations. That is to say, he included his mother and brethren if they also did the will of God. If they did not do the will of God, then this inner circle, if they do the will of God, take the place of and are preferred before natural relations, and become his mother and his sisters and his brethren. That is very delightful to hear. We talk so much about the "sweet will of God." It is a very charming thing to talk about the sweet will of God. That is all right if we mean that, no matter what that will may be, simply because it is our Father's will, and whether

it is disagreeable or otherwise, it is sweet to us because it is the will of God. It is one thing for us, in a sort of ethereal, transcendental, sublimated sort of way to draw ourselves aside from the ordinary duties of life ; to get away from the dishes ; to dodge the slum work, garret work and all sorts of work that require self-denial,—it is easy, I say, to go into a parlor meeting and have a sort of “mutual admiration society,” and to talk softly and sweetly of “the sweet will of God.” That is one picture.

Now turn over to this in the Acts. Here are disciples who tell Paul “not to go to Jerusalem,” and they tell him by the Holy Ghost. It says so here. We cannot understand it maybe, but we must accept the fact. There are a thousand and one things that come to me that I cannot understand, but I know them just the same. Then here comes Agabus, and he gives an object lesson ; he loosens Paul’s girdle and ties it around himself, and goes on to say, “Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle,” etc. It is one thing to accept the will of God, the “sweet will of God,” on general principles ; it is another thing to accept the will of God with the possibility and the probability and with a fair certainty that that will of God will not always be pleasant, and what we want it to be ; with the probability that it may involve dangers, perhaps exile and death ; it is one

thing to accept the will of God with the idea that there is a fair probability of trouble ahead, but that is not the case yet, as is stated here,—here was the *dead certainty*. He was warned beforehand. “Do not go to Jerusalem ; you will be exiled ; danger and perhaps death await you.” Now for a man, right in the teeth of all that, with these messages brought to him by the Holy Ghost, while his heart was breaking, for a man to put aside his best friends, with their broken hearts, and say that he would go on, and then for the disciples, in sheer desperation because their tears and warnings could not dissuade him, to chime in and say, “The will of the Lord be done ! The will of the Lord be done !”—this is different. It is one thing to hear Christ claiming nearer relationship to us than to natural kindred, and quite another to have our fidelity to the will of God put to such a test ; to know that, while our hearts are breaking and friends are holding on to us, that our fidelity will cause us just to gently push them aside and say, “I hear the call ; I see the divine eye ; the finger of God is pointing this way. It may involve troubles, losses, difficulties, dangers, persecution, martyrdom,—ah, to push through friends, and through tears, and through a man’s own heart !—that is holy heroism, that is what is meant by being “abandoned to the Holy Ghost.” “Abandoned,” without any bargaining ; “abandoned,” without any mental

reservation ; "abandoned," with a boundless confidence in the divine wisdom ; in the divine goodness ; in the divine mercy ; in the divine love, and in the divine power. Like Abraham going out not knowing whither we go ; ready to leave friends and home and nation, and all that the human heart holds dear, and just to have an eye single to the glory of God. When we reach there, what a sublime faith ! what a sublime hope ! what a sublime independence ! It is putting our hand in the Holy Ghost's hand and saying : "Lead on, kindly Light ! Lead Thou me on." And yet even a Father must sometimes allow his child to suffer.

Here are then two pictures. In taking the one let us be sure we include the other. Let us get into the "whosoever" that is ready to accept the "whatsoever," and the "whensoever," and the "howsoever," and the "wheresoever."

I do not often tell my experience, I know. I am leading a sort of a silent life. I cannot tell you how unreal material things seem to me. I cannot tell you how I wear this life "as a loose garment." I cannot tell you what a deep, intense and eternal reality there is in spiritual things. I cannot describe what it is to enjoy and to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. The invisible things of this world are the most powerful things in it. If you do not believe it, touch one of those wires when the power is on, you will not know what struck you, but you will

know that you are struck. (Brother Thompson ; You would hardly know that even.) I lie down at night on the bosom of God. Glory ! I live out in the country, and I wake up in the morning and see the leaves quivering on the trees. I cannot account for them, but I know that my Father knows every leaf, that he keeps it in place and sustains it. I know that, with all the leaves that are still clinging to the trees, and all which are fading and slowly winging their way to the ground,—I know that with the ease that I can count one, the heavenly Father can count all.

Rev. Isaac Naylor said, when we were speaking of these things the other day, “God does care for the leaves and the sparrows, but one is inanimate and the other without the power of morals ; but God only cares for us on conditions.” True enough ! we may dwell too much on the paternal government of God—the Fatherhood of God—and ignore his rectoral and administrative government. We must meet the conditions on which God promises to care for us and save us. But to feel that we prefer his will above our own and above every other will, to feel that his will is our delightful law, to feel that elevated and refined and intense and absolute preference for the will of God brings us under the “whosoever.” To feel that Christ recognizes us as nearer than brother, mother, father or sister, oh, what a life this is ! Do you

not see that to such in a few short years "the path of the just, which, as a shining light, is shining brighter and brighter unto that perfect day?" Do you not see that to them the "Sun of Righteousness" never goes down? Do you not see that we are in a path that is leading us on, through the darkness of this life, into eternal life; the light of God; the light of the great white throne; the light that is not from a candle, because "there they have no need of a candle;" but the light that comes from the central sun, the "Sun of Righteousness?" Oh, to hang on to God! Oh, to climb upon the divine knee! Oh, to get into the "Everlasting Arms!" Oh, to get on the divine bosom! Oh, to feel that whatever happens, happens only because he lets it! When we get there we are in security. We are in his power, it is true, but in the power of One who "hath loved us with an everlasting love," and who loves us as no one else can love us.

SELF-PITY.

December 13, 1894.

Text, Mark 8 : 31-35.

What Peter said no doubt was well-meant, yet it was very severely rebuked : "Get thee behind me, Satan." Now, on the face of it, according to our translation, there does not seem to be so much in these words of Peter to call for such strong rebuke. The margin offers something of an explanation : "Pity thyself, Lord." Christ had been talking about going to Jerusalem, and about suffering many things, and then being killed. Peter comes in with this idea of self-pity.

There are lots of self-pitiers in this world, and lots of people chime in with them, and help them out. We ought to sympathize with and encourage and even to pity other people, but whether it is a safe thing to get people to pitying themselves is a question. We will have to be a little on our guard with people who have gotten into a habit of self-pity, especially where self-pity stands in the way of the crucifixion of self and the resurrection into the spiritual life, and ultimately into the eternal life.

Self-pity, however, does not stop people from talking about suffering. Christ talked about his. Yet when Peter came with that suggestion to pity himself, he told him to get behind

him ; that he savored more of the human than of the Divine. Immediately afterward he said : "Whosoever will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it." It is not that a man should not care for his health or strength. What is meant here is a man giving way to self-pity when he ought to be a hero. It means that a man should not be trying to save himself from martyrdom and death when he ought to be willing to go to death for the sake of the Lord Jesus. There is work that cannot be done without undermining a man's health—I mean work for God where a man should not stop to consider his own life, but where he has reached such a pitch of heroism that, though he die, he is bound to do his duty.

How our friends come at such times with, "Do not do this ! You will kill yourself." If we should take half the time to do half the things for self-preservation that they suggest, there would not be time to do anything else. Oh, there are subtle influences that gather about us that undermine us ! They come from our friends. No doubt Peter was Christ's sincere friend. I really pity him. It was very hard to be severely rebuked. Christ had just commended him. When we are commended we begin to get "uppish," and so we have to be taken down. "Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my church." Peter, on the

strength of his recent commendation, offers a little advice. He would keep Christ back from suffering and death. But that would keep him back from the resurrection which follows them.

Everybody has a cross to bear. Everybody has a life to lay down. Everybody is under obligation in this respect to follow the Lamb. We must be on our guard and wise, not only in dodging Satan, but others who come to us in the shape of friends, like Peter. You see this advising of self-pity is a lack of good judgment. It is trying to give peace and hope and comfort and dissuasion where we ought to look the thing squarely in the face and see that it must be done. Many try to get others to be sanctified wholly by telling them, "This is a great privilege: you will never have any trouble; the Lord will be on your side." That is no way to get anybody sanctified.

Rev. Andrew Longacre once said that "there was a tendency in giving our experience to give the victory side only, so that people come to think there is no other side to it." But the grace of God is magnified in trial. That is "religion made easy." It is the easiness of God coming down to our every-day, commonplace life, and making the trials the occasion for glorifying the grace He gives. That is all that religion is good for.

I read the other day of a little child who, when some one was putting her to bed, and

said something to her about trying not to be so cross, she was right up in the bed in an instant. "Oh, when it's me it's 'cross,' but whenever it's you it's 'nervous!'" We must call things by their right names. If a man is downright out of temper; or (looking at Friend Flitcraft) "tried," as you "Friends" put it, let him own up. Let him not call it "nervousness." Let us, no matter how weak and suffering we are; no matter how body or mind or heart may endure, let us have the Christ-like Spirit that puts a friend, like Peter, behind our back, and refuses to be drawn from duty even by the prospect of death.

I often think of Jesus in Gethsemane praying three times: "Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me." What suffering that must have been to draw such a prayer as that from Jesus Christ! Then followed: "Nevertheless, not as I will." So also in that other passage He prayed, "Lord, save me from this hour," but then He goes on to remind Himself, "Yet for this cause came I unto this hour." There Christ actually prays that He may be saved from this hour, when there seems to be immediately afterward a sort of self-recollection that He had quitted the bosom of the Father and the company of angels to come to this hour; that the whole design of His incarnation was to bring Him up to this hour; and that, in asking to be saved from this hour,

He asked to be saved from the very thing He came for.

In our religion we conquer by dying. In our religion we are saved by suffering. In our religion we reach resurrection unto spiritual and eternal life by forgetting our life and giving up our life and consecrating ourselves in utter abandonment to God. It is the suffering of Jesus that saves others. And in some sense we are called upon to suffer to save others,—He by atonement, but we by the necessity of the case. We have a right to talk about it. A little child, if he is hurt, finds some relief in saying "Ouch!" We are not fools. It is not that we do not realize the full force of the things that come upon us. It is being saved in, through and out of the things.

St. Paul says: "Do all things without murmuring." That passage has been in my mind for years. We trip in that direction. It would be well to take account of our conversation, and see how much of it is made up of "murmuring" against things and events and men and God. Oh, what a sublimity of faith a man reaches when he can say, "Glory to God anyhow!" when a man can turn his suffering into the raw material for the manufacture of "glories." My soul is on fire. Glory! I am talking to you right out of my heart and my life.

(Pausing a few moments the speaker closed by asking)—Shall we quit pitying ourselves?

HUMILITY GREATER THAN LOVE.

December 20, 1894.

Text.—Matthew 18 : 1-4.

You remember how the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians ends, where Paul speaks of "faith, hope and love ; but the greatest of these is love."

Is there anything greater than love? Look at the position that the Lord Jesus Christ gives to child-like humility! "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus set a little child in their midst, and then he goes on to say, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Humility, according to this statement, is the greatest of all Christian graces. It is the foundation of all Christian graces. It is the grace without which no other Christian grace can be. It is interwoven into the very warp and woof of religion. It is the essential part of conversion.

It is not only the greatest in this respect, but it makes the possessor of it the greatest of all. I say that humility is not only the greatest of all graces by the relation it holds to all other graces, and by its own intrinsic worth, but it makes the one who possesses it the greatest of all. There is no greatness in the kingdom of

God, or outside the kingdom of God, that is like the greatness of childlike goodness. That is, the farther a man goes down the farther he goes up. That is, the less there is of a man, the more there is of him. The humility that is unconscious of every other grace it has, including this grace also, that is the greatest grace of all. We speak about being humble. The farther we go on, the deeper we go in, the more comprehensive view we have of Christian truth, the more this grace will grow upon us. We speak about humility being self-forgetful. We speak about the absence of self-consciousness in humility. We say that humility does not know that itself is around. I believe there are experiences ; I believe there are states of religious life ; I believe that there is a phase of personal piety ; I believe that there is this frame of mind and condition of soul that is not temporary, but lasts, by the grace of God, forever, as the normal condition of the human soul, in which the heart, while it is truly humble, is so humble that it forgets its own humility. That is humility. The greatest people of all are the people that have the least consciousness of their greatness. While they possess the grace of humility in its ripeness and fulness, and everybody else can see it and feel it, yet they have got somewhere where they never have before thought so meanly of themselves.

To-day I was crossing the street, and there seemed to come in such a view of myself. When I considered all my advantages from my youth up, what a father I had, what a mother I had, and growing up on such spiritual diet as I did, it was about as much as I could endure to endure myself. There seemed so little of anything for self-congratulation.

I do believe that there are those conditions, those experiences where, while the things are there, and others know that they are there, and while in one sense there is the witness of the Holy Ghost that we are fully saved, yet it seems such a wonderful thing, for who or what are we !

While that is so in advanced spiritual life, yet at the same time, for people to take the ground that humility comes of itself ; that it has nothing of the human will or cultivation about it, but is all from God—that is a mistake. Look at the peculiarity of this phraseology ; “ Whosoever therefore shall *humble himself*.” It may be, as we get very far along, where it is so ripe and rich and full that we are not conscious of the effort to be humble, and to keep humble as we once were, we are in a chronic condition of humility and forgivingness. Yet I believe in the beginning of the religious life, in conviction, the proud soul there goes down in the dust ; there the proud man comes to see that “ he is nothing at all, and Jesus Christ is all and in all ; ” there a man eats his own words,

and confesses before God and man that he is verily guilty of sinning against the whole law. "Whosoever therefore shall *humble himself*." That is what we call gracious habit. Habit is a strong thing. He gets in the habit of being "nothing at all." After a man has humbled himself and allowed God to humble him, the thing keeps on. As he abases himself, he is exalted. That is the paradox in the religious life.

Some say, "I want to be somebody in the world, or in the church, or even in the holiness cause." Well, how easy that is! Why, that is what St. Paul says,—God chooses the nobodies, those that are nothing at all, to bring to naught the things that are. It is the divine choice. It is "the things that are not" that he chooses to bring to naught "the things that are." So that God, who created everything out of nothing, can use us for the accomplishment of his purpose. All our shamefacedness comes from the fact that we are not humble. Can we get to this point where somehow we humble ourselves, and then can we reach a point where it becomes a habit, and then can we reach a still further point where God almost exclusively does the thing for us right straight along? When I get talking about these things I feel ashamed. I join Brother Thomson's oft-repeated exhortation and testimony about being humble, and asking us to join him.

GROUND OF PERSONAL TRUST.

December 27, 1894.

Text. Acts 27 : 21-25, and 35.

There are three grounds on which St. Paul bases his confidence :

The first is, "Whose I am." There is no stronger, no better basis for personal confidence in God than a thorough persuasion that we are entirely consecrated and entirely sanctified to God. A man must believe in God before he can believe in himself. A man must believe in himself before he can thoroughly believe in God. What I mean to say is : Until a man is persuaded that he has given himself wholly to God, that his consecration is full, and that he is true throughout and candid with God and man, until he reaches that point, he cannot believe in God as he can after he is conscious that he has given himself and all his concerns over into the hand of God, "Whose I am." To know that by my own personal, cheerful, voluntary devotion of myself to God, I hand all that I am, all that I have, all that I ever expect to be and have, over to God. When a man does that he is on "believing ground," sure. We talk about getting on believing ground ; we try to urge people to believe,—“Only believe, believe ; if you will only believe, the answer will come ;

you must believe," etc. In so doing we are working on the wrong string. They have to be consciously, wholly consecrated to God, and then you do not have to tell them to believe,— "it believes itself." All this is an easy, namby-pamby sort of way of trying to get people saved! Ah, it is getting every one into a condition where he can say, "I know that I am wholly consecrated; I know that I have laid all upon the altar,"—when a man gets there, where he can say this truly and consciously, he will do the believing without any direction or help from you. "Whose I am! Whose I am!" Oh, this conviction, this persuasion, this witness of the Holy Ghost and the witness of our own spirits that we are the Lord's; that we belong to Him supremely, fully! When we reach that point that is one ground of confidence.

Then there is another ground for Paul's confidence: "Whom I serve." To know, not simply that I belong to God, but that I am serving God. In all that I do, in all things, under all circumstances, to be able to say, "I am serving God." That is another ground for confidence. No man can say, "Whom I serve," until he can say, "Whose I am." A man must *be* before he can *do*. A man must have purity before he can have "power." This making "The Baptism with the Holy Ghost for Service" independent of the cleansing of the heart from sin, making the point on "power" rather than on purity,

and on the fact that our experience is right,—that is the fallacy of this day. Any one who ignores purity as the very essential point, the very foundation of “The Baptism of Power for Service,” has missed his way. While a man may have, to some extent, a useful life, while he has preached to others, and success has, in a measure, attended his efforts, the thing does not somehow work right in his own heart and experience. The secret of success does not seem to come to him. Purity of heart precedes “power for service.”

Then, the third ground for his confidence was the God-sent angel.

When it comes to the *sweep* of his confidence, it was not only in regard to himself that he felt it, but all who sailed with him. God had a gracious plan concerning him, and the Divine protection would be over him until that plan was fully carried out. You say that is Calvinism? Well, God has His plan, nevertheless, and God has His purpose nevertheless, and God will develop that purpose and protect all instrumentalities until its accomplishment, until the plan is fully carried out.

The *strength* of his confidence is shown in this verse (25), “I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.” The winds were howling; the waves were rising all around that vessel. Everybody was in the utmost terror, yet such was Paul’s confidence in this One

“whose he was” and “whom he served,” that right in the midst of the storm he stood breaking bread, and telling them to eat, and eating it himself. That is a proof of faith when we can stand right in the midst of the storm, when people all around us are weeping and giving way, when people come to us and cling to us, and try to get the benefit of our personal trust in God. Under such circumstances as that, for a man not only to profess faith and confidence, but to back it up by such trustful, calm, quiet behaviour, that is confidence. Belief that God had a plan and would carry it out was the secret of Paul’s serenity. He not only professed his faith, but he backed it up by his behavior.

St. Paul believed in that angel. People say, “Oh, well, if an angel would come I would not have any difficulty in believing an angel!” Are you sure of that? You know Jesus said, that if they rejected the written Word of God they would not believe though one were sent from the dead. “Oh, if an angel would come! If I had a vision! If God would only come right into my life and get hold of me in such a way that I could not doubt, I would believe.”

We have God’s own written Word, and that is confirmed to us by divine oath, and by universal experience and testimony. There is no grander exhibition of faith than was given by that centurion when he said, “Speak the word

only ; you say that my servant shall be healed ; that is all I want. I do not need to go home to see how things are getting on ; speak the word only." The grandest thing in this world is to get beyond sign-seeking and sight-seeing. People say that "seeing is believing." It is not. Seeing is knowing. A man may, however, gladly accept any sign that God chooses to give, for sign-receiving and sign-seeking are two different things. I will take all the signs that God chooses to grant me, but I will ask for none. I will not put "signs" in the place of fact, nor "sight" in the place of confidence in God. In my early Christian history I fell into that snare. But, afterward, I read that everything grows out of faith, not feeling. That is what the Scripture says, "The just shall live by faith," or, "The justified by faith shall live,"—it amounts to the same thing. I would rather have the Bible than an angel, or some one coming to me from the dead. I would rather have His simple naked word than all those signs coming to me. I think that when God sees we are going to stick to the line of faith, he is not afraid to trust us with a few "signs," but when we go to asking "signs" he will hold them back until faith is a little stronger. You believe God, and believe God's word, and there will be "something to show for it."

A PROSPEROUS JOURNEY.

January 3, 1895.

Text, Romans 1 : 10-13.

Holiness is a far-reaching word. Perhaps a more definite expression is that of "entire sanctification."

Entire sanctification, as an abstract doctrine, is a very wholesome doctrine, a very profitable doctrine, a charming doctrine, and a doctrine very full of comfort; that is in the abstract (if holiness can be in the abstract); but then it is better when it comes down into our deep, heart-felt, ever-gladdening experiences.

Then, there is such a thing as entire sanctification applied; practical entire sanctification: having entire sanctification coming down to our everyday common-place living; having it not only in our hearts, but also in our homes. The Psalmist says, "I will walk within mine house with a perfect heart." If we had more of that *home* holiness, what a telling thing it would be! It is nice to talk in these meetings, but if a man's wife and children and servants, yes, especially the servants, are present, and can witness to the truth of his profession, it is a wonderful thing. "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Whatsoever? Do you think

that such a thing can possibly be? Eating and drinking to the glory of God.

The apostle is here talking about making visits. The visits of an entirely sanctified soul cannot be along the line of ordinary visitation; not by any means. The apostle had wanted to come to them before, but the Lord would not let him. But here he prays, "If by any means he might be permitted a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto them."

Now, what is a really "prosperous journey"?

There are two things by which the apostle indicates a "prosperous journey."

One is, that it is the result of pleading prayer. I wonder how many visits we would make, and what kind of visits they would be, if we prayed over them? Look how strongly he speaks: "If by any means." It was an earnest, importunate, pleading prayer. It does not take long to make a pleading prayer.

The next way he indicates a prosperous journey is, that it is "by the will of God." Is it possible that all our visits can be by the will of God? Is it possible that we are to have divine guidance down into such things as where we go and among whom we go? Why it is astonishing how careless we are in this matter! Not only worldly people, but even among religious people this indifference to religious visitation is felt. Oh for a man to feel that he is "a good man" in the scriptural sense, and that

"the *steps* of a good man are ordered of the Lord." What a walk that would be! That would be walking with God as Enoch did. Wonderfully so! No haphazard stepping. I used to live opposite an insane asylum, and I watched the inmates as they walked around the grounds. I thought there was something odd about their movements. Then I watched other people, and was surprised that they walked much the same. Ah, the difference is internal, not external. It is divine guidance. It is God leading us where we go and to whom we should go.

The first *object* of a "prosperous journey" is Christian association: "I long to see you." I once got under temptation. I thought I must stick to business and must not indulge myself in going too much with good people. I felt I ought to keep to the Lord, but I must not go to too many good meetings, and wander around among good people. But a man could come to this meeting, and out of the little time spent here he could get such help from holy association that the fragrance and beauty of it would spread itself all over his week? You remember when the woman broke the alabaster box the odor went all through the room. There is a fragrance in saintliness. There is sweetness in holy association. And there is, in the Christian's heart, an intense desire to be with those who are wholly the Lord's,—with those who

think and feel and talk and act as we do. I am glad that the Lord does not want us to go to heaven alone. Religion provides for our social principles, and it is our right and our desire to be as much as we can, without neglecting other duties, with those who are wholly the Lord's.

But it will not do for a man to neglect his business or his home, or run away from other duties merely to get into good meetings. In this instance it was not mere good feeling or delightful association. St. Paul wanted, but the apostle "desired to impart unto them some spiritual gift." Perhaps that "gift" implied something which is beyond our power to bestow; something on the miraculous order. But while it meant that, it meant also the impartation of spiritual help unto those with whom he wanted to be associated. There should be a desire on our part, in every visit, to impart some "spiritual gift." Oh, this dispensing of spiritual helps! Everywhere we go, we go "by the will of God," and in "answer to prayer," not only to enjoy spiritual society, but to carry some "spiritual gift." Jesus gets in somewhere. People do not say of us, "Why, I never knew that that man was a Christian!" It is like ointment, its odor spreads all over the house. There is a possibility of carrying that atmosphere wherever we go. Oh, this intense, perpetual spirituality that is in us and only gets out of us in delightful fragrance!

Is this all? Oh, no! It was not simply this association St. Paul wanted, and to impart some spiritual gift, but his ultimate object was "to the end ye may be established." This was what the will of God was in that visit, and what the spiritual gift was for. It was not something that only remained while he remained. It remained after he was gone and established them.

But is that all he desired? Not quite. He goes on to say: "That I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." Is not that a beautiful verse? Here was this great, strong-minded and strong-hearted apostle; here was this man who could go from his home and nation and friends into solitude and stay there; yet when approaching Rome, when he saw the brethren coming to greet him, "he thanked God and took courage;" he could stand solitude, but it was a comfort to him to be welcomed. Think of this great man of God going into some humble place and getting comfort out of an interview like that.

Just one more thing he desired: "That I might have some fruit among you as among others." Oh these fruitful experiences! Oh these fruitful ministries! Oh these fruitful lives! Oh these fruitful visits! Oh those fruitful journeys that grow out of the will of God; that are guided by the will of God; so that, wherever a man goes there is something in his look or his words or his manner that makes him a perpet-

ual sunshine and blessing! There are some pastors who save more souls by their private ministries than by their public preaching; preachers who go into the work-shops and homes; and wherever they go, souls are saved, and they get fruit.

To sum up: Holiness in everyday life; holiness in our visitations; holiness in answer to prayer; holiness by the will of God; holiness that comforts our own souls and others' souls, and everybody within reach.

Lord, get us beyond our useless visiting, and get the best out of us for God and souls!

THE BIBLE IN HOT HEARTS.

February 1, 1895.

Text, Mark 4 : 15.

Notice the peculiarity of that expression, "The Word was sown in their *hearts*." It was not that the Word had simply got into their ears, nor that it had simply found lodgment in their brains. The Word may get into our ears and into our brains, and it does not amount to much. Nor was it that it had simply got into their consciences, which is better than getting into the ears or into the brain ; for when a man becomes what we call deeply conscientious, scripturally conscientious, he is pretty far along. I do not mean a sore conscience, that is a torment. I mean a tender, rightly-instructed conscience, a scripturally-instructed conscience ; for a conscience not founded on the Scriptures, and uninstructed by the Holy Ghost, is a merely human thing ; it is a dangerous thing ; it is not a divine or a scriptural thing. A man's conscience may misguide him. One man's conscience may tell him to throw his child into the river, to thus procure his own salvation ; and another's may tell him to do things as wide apart from the Scriptures as Hell is from Heaven. Nothing is safe but a scriptural conscience. It is a glorious thing when the Word of God gets into a man's conscience. It crushes

the conceit and self-complacency out of him. But, after all, it may stop there. The Word of God may even get into our *lives*. There are some professedly religious people who are the greatest drudges in this world. They are legalists, self-righteous people, ignorant of God's righteous way of saving men, going about to establish their own righteousness. Bishop Taylor likens this "going about" to the blind horse in the mill, "going about," around and around, "going about" tied to a post. Now I say that the Word of God may get into a man's *life*, and impress his behavior; but our text says, "The Word of God was sown in their *hearts*." That is, they loved the Word of God. They had gone that far.

Satan's great aim is to get the Word out of our *ears* and *brains* and *consciences*, and out of our *lives*, but, above all, he wants to get it out of our *hearts*. I would not give two cents for a man's conscience that is not backed up by his heart. Love is the most potent word in the English language. "Ought" tells us what we should do: love gives us power to do it. Satan knows that, and so he wants to get the Word of God out of our *hearts*.

When I speak of loving God's Word, I mean that we can love his *precepts* as much as we love his *promises*. If we do not love his precept as much as we love his promise, we never get the promise. I say to my child, "Do this, and I

will give you that. If you do not do it, I cannot give you the other." If I am a true parent, I will keep my word. We must love God's precepts as much as his promises, his commands as much as what are sometimes called the sweet, deep passages of God's Word. Some take the Bible and weep and sigh, and want to know "how *you* get so much out of the Word, and seem to feast on it, while *I* starve?" They want the cake without paying the penny—that is about the amount of it. We can feast on the Scriptures if we pay the price.

The Psalmist says, "Oh, how I love thy law!" How is it that we love the law of God? It is the "perfect law of liberty." Is that not a singularly mixed-up thing? You may say, "I thought that a law was to restrict a man." It is the "law of liberty." Where there are no just laws, how talk about liberty? There is no *liberty*, but *licentiousness* of every kind. It is the liberty of law, and God's law is "the perfect law of liberty;" therefore Christ says, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Sometimes a man or woman will spring up in meeting and say, "I am free in Christ Jesus;" but do you know how much there is in a sentence like that? It means that "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

The trouble with some of us is, unscriptural ears and brains. If a man has not scriptural

brains, if his brain is not crowded with the Bible, he is dangerous to himself and to others.. Brilliancy and Bible should go together. We may have unscriptural brains and lives and hearts. Some say, "I do not have to read my Bible any more. I have the Divine Holy Ghost. 'The Word killeth, and the Spirit giveth life.' I am farther on than you," etc. How did you ever find out that there was a Holy Ghost except by the Bible? How do you know anything about spirituality except as you get it in the Scriptures? You never knew it or felt it until you got it from there. It is like a man who, at first, cannot hobble around, and when he gets cured, throws away the Bible as he would a pair of old crutches. Let a man keep to the Word of God, and he will not strike the rocks on either side. The old *dévil* wants to get the Word out of our *hearts*. Just let anybody try to separate you from the Word of God, and you may make up your mind that you "smell sulphur." Mark that! I tell you the devil is around. Oh, I have not lived in this world as many years as I have, without seeing many shipwrecks on that shore! The devil does not want the Word in our consciences and brains and lives, but he knows that if he gets it out of the heart, he will get it out of all the rest. "Satan cometh *immediately*." Brethren and sisters, Scripture never drops without Satan seeing it, and he will not let it lie there long if

he can get it away. Mark that ! “ *Immediately.*” Oh how quickly he moves ! Some people get the Word of God in their hearts to-day and they are all on fire, and to-morrow, what ails them ? Well, you see that Satan knew it would not do to leave that Bible-word in their hearts, and so he comes in immediately and snatches it out. Oh let us get the Bible in our hearts, and then look out for him ! There are birds that are away up in the air, and in a moment they are down to the ground, and up again, so quickly do they move. Satan fell from heaven once like lightning. He is good at getting down quickly and good at getting the Word out of our hearts. O that we might *love* God’s Word. I tell you, if a man gets a good piece of meat on the wood, and makes a good fire of the wood about the meat, no bird will come down to pick it off. Let us get our souls on fire with the Word, and the Word on fire in our souls. Glory be to God ! I think that is the reason the Bible sticks to me so. I think that it gets my soul so hot, that when Satan looks down he thinks, “ I guess I had better not go down there, I would get scorched. I guess I will let him have that precious piece.” Oh for hot hearts, hearts filled with Scriptural spirituality, and then Satan will not come down “ immediately,” and take it away.

GOD GIVES TO THOSE WHO HAVE.

February 15, 1895.

Text, Mark 4: 25, 33.

Now, if one rich man sees another rich man coming toward him he does not begin to fumble in his pocket for money to give the other rich man. He knows that the other has money enough to get all that he needs. But if he sees a poor man with ragged clothing coming along he says to himself, "I must give this poor fellow something to help him along," and down goes his hand into his pocket. That is the way we work, and the only limit to that style of giving is, that if we happen to know the poor man, and know that he will take the money only to drop it into the nearest rum hole, or waste it in some way, then we will hold on to it. That is the human way.

The divine way is just the opposite. It is not to the spiritually poor, but to the spiritually rich, that God keeps on giving, for the simple reason that if we are spiritually poor, it is our own fault. There is always a moral tinge to our spiritual poverty. It may be our misfortune if we are poor in this world's goods, but not so with spiritual poverty. If I lack faith it is not altogether a matter of brain, but it is a matter

of heart, for it is "with the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness." That is a peculiar expression. We are apt to say, "It does not matter what a man believes, just so his *heart* is right." The fact is, a man never believes right unless his heart is right. We talk about "pure reason" and "pure logic" and "pure faith." They are the rarest of all things in this world. Christ says that we "judge after the flesh;" that is, our lower nature—our "flesh"—bewilders, perverts, betrays and dominates our higher nature—our judgment. Of the man who is in spiritual darkness, it cannot be said that it is his *misfortune* to be so. Jesus says, "Ye love darkness rather than light because your deeds are evil."

God *gives* to the one who *has*! Oh just to think! The piling up of our spiritual riches is the reason we shall have more. It is a thing that gathers on itself. Is that not a wonderful thing? The more we have, the more we get. There is a tendency in money to fly together. It is the tendency of riches to heap up, and in morality and religion and spirituality, how the pennies and the silver and the gold fly together! How the Bible flies together! How experience and practice fly together! The more we get, the more we are getting.

The measure by which this is given is found in the second text: "And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, *as they*

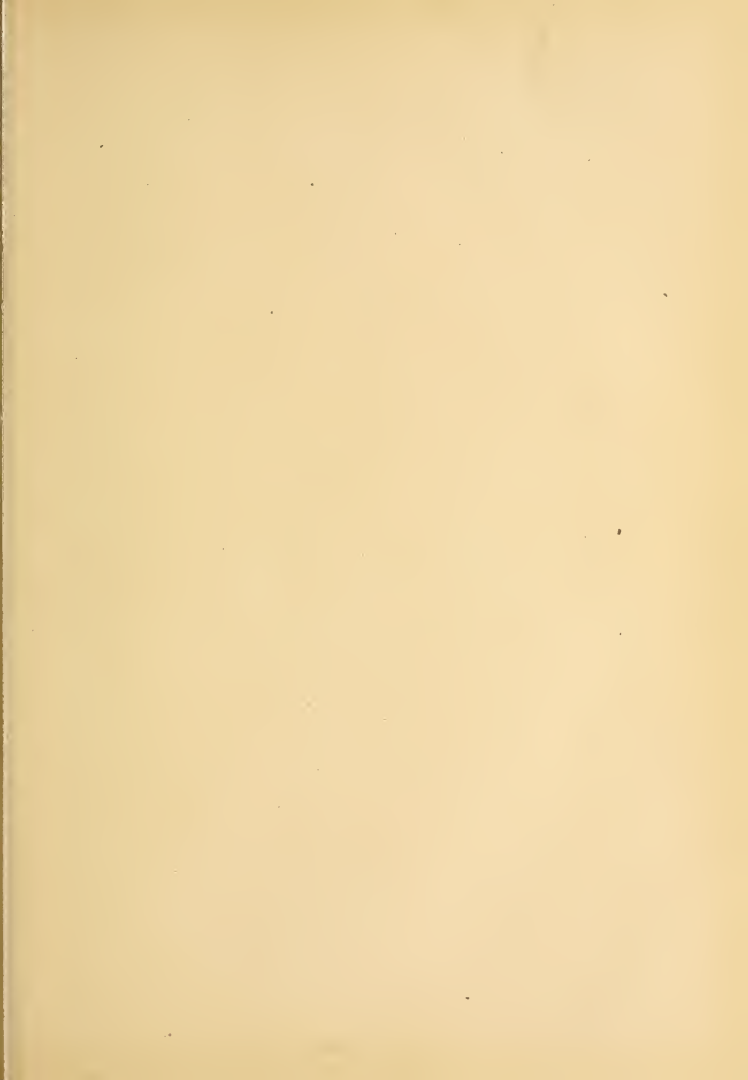
were able to bear it." "Oh," says one, "if I only had the mental ability to take God's Word, or if I had only studied it as I ought to have done!" Why, a man may read the Bible through a hundred times, and it may just go through his brain like a sieve. Christ here was talking Bible to them; but he was talking it to them "as they were able to bear it." This ability is not altogether mental or natural or acquired ability. They are all included, of course, but in religion it is not so much a matter of time or acquisition or natural ability, but it is a matter of gracious ability.

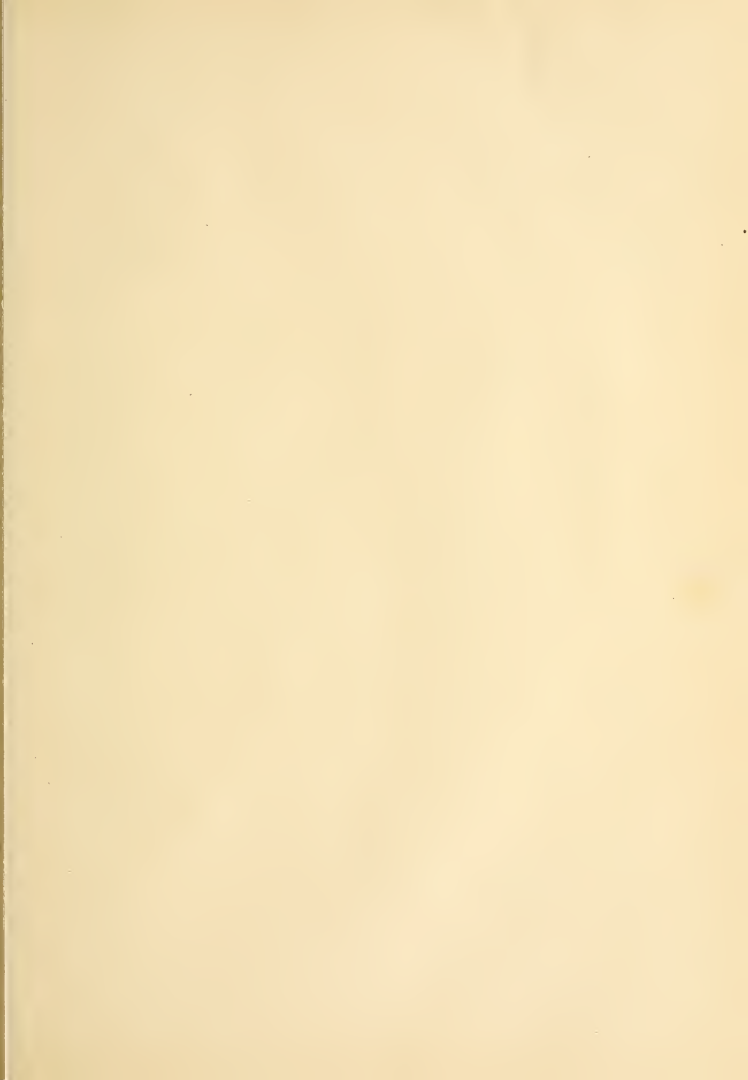
I can find you people in this room who know more Bible, and are richer in what Bible they have, than some who have been professionally studying it all their lives. The Holy Ghost in the twinkling of an eye can send through my brain and soul, and *has* done it hundreds of times, light that I had never received until that hour! There comes an enduement, an enlightenment, a sort of an inspiration, a sort of a revelation, a sort of an opening up—just as Christ, on the way to Emmaus that day, took the old, old Scriptures they had been studying all their lives, and in the short walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus showed them more than they had ever known before.

How God does delight to put into the willing soul the riches of his Word that gives light and love and power! If we have we will get.

The richer we are, the richer we will keep getting. The one who is farthest along, the one who is richest in Bible, richest in experience, richest in life, richest in communion with God,—the spiritual millionaire here to-day, ah, the Lord can take your million and pop another million on it as quick as a flash. What does it matter to him if he gives you five or ten, or thousands and thousands, or millions and millions? He just piles it on. It is not the "*poor* me's" that get more ; it is the *rich* me's.

No wonder that the Romish idea that one must go through penance to get favors from God makes those who accept such idea as blue as indigo. If you get the Bible idea it is, "Rejoice evermore! In everything give thanks!" It stops grumbling and fret and complaining. My mother's pantry door stood open, not a key in it, and I could go at any time of the day or night and get all I wanted. The Lord does not keep his pantry all locked up for fear the good things will not hold out. He keeps the door open. The more you get, the more you want, and the more you have. Let us double up, let us not wait to get into a mental, natural or acquired ability, but let God give us now a gracious ability, so that our million may become two, in grace and in God.











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